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THE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS OF JESUS.

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II.

In our previous paper we considered the historical aspects of the problem involved in the self-consciousness of Jesus ;—in the former part of that paper the nature of the problem and its importance ; in the latter part, the sources to which we must go for its investigation. We found those sources to be both direct and indirect—the former, the historic record, and the latter, the historic environment of the life.

We must bear in mind, however, that the problem, though so closely connected with documentary evidence, is in itself, in the broadest and deepest sense, a study of life, a life problem. Indeed, it is for this reason that we study the life in connection with its environment, the life of the Jewish people. That aggregate of tendencies and conceptions that represent this life, we may call the consciousness of the Jewish people. We have then, on the one hand, the consciousness of the Jewish people, the result of centuries of a national and social life unique in the history of the world, and, on the other hand, growing up within this life, a part of it, and yet distinct from it, greatly influenced by it, reflecting it to some extent, yet very diverse—the consciousness of Jesus. In what does the consciousness of Jesus agree with, and in what differ from, the national consciousness ? In what is the personality of Jesus unique ? Though we cannot consider the life of Jesus apart from the life of the Jewish people, since the latter formed the environment in which Jesus lived, and gave to him the language and the conceptions in which his consciousness developed, yet we must not forget that below all language and con-

ceptions and customs, is the life itself, for which all these form the vehicle of expression, the mode of manifestation. It is not merely, then, the life in relation to its environment; it is the life itself in those broader relations and in those deeper channels, that are not peculiar to men as members of a particular race, but belong to man as man, that we wish to consider. What is the life of Jesus in its universal, not local or national relations? What is it in its essential religious elements, stripped of its particular Jewish garb? What is his conception of God, and of his own relation to him? What his conception of man? What his conception of his own personality, his own work, his own destiny?

The consideration of this problem as a life problem, leads us to what we may call, in distinction from the historical aspects treated in our first paper:

3. *The Scientific Aspects of the Problem.* The problem in history becomes a problem in biology. This problem, though in the sphere of the religious life, is not foreign to the domain of science. We have heard much about the conflict between science and religion. There can be no conflict between true science and true religion, between truth in science and truth in religion. The sphere of the religious life is as much the domain of science, as is any other sphere. And as in other spheres, so in this sphere, there are conditions peculiar to this sphere that must determine the nature of investigation within it.

It is important to dwell upon the fact that it is in the sphere of self-consciousness that we study the life in its essential nature, and so ally our study to all scientific investigation. For this is the sphere of the life itself as it existed in its reality, apart from all subsequent conceptions of it, apart from all that may be called accidents of environment. The most exacting science can demand no deeper or truer sphere than this in which to study the life of Christ. Were a scientist to study this life as he studies other life he would approach it from this point of view. In any investigation, science demands two things: (1) that the object regarding which knowledge is sought be investigated in its essential nature; (2) that the methods be such as shall lead

to the facts of that nature. To be scientific the search, both in the results aimed at and in the methods used, must be conditioned by the object itself. There is no breach between scientific knowledge and any true knowledge. Scientific is opposed to unscientific as that which is adequate or true, is opposed to that which is inadequate or false. It is because in so many realms of investigation the pursuit has not aimed at the heart of the thing investigated, and because the method of arriving at truth has been inadequate, unsuited to the nature of the object investigated, unfit to arrive at true and complete knowledge, that the word scientific has come to be used to denote the true method of knowledge. The word scientific itself indicates the nature of the function of science. The root of the word means to know. To know a thing we must know it in its essential nature—not some of its external features, not some of its attributes, not some of its superficial relations, not about the thing—but the thing itself, as it is in itself. Science aims that our knowledge shall be in exact relation to the fact. It rests content with no knowledge that represents more or less than this. So much for the object of knowledge. As for the methods of knowledge they must be such as shall have been determined by the nature of the object investigated. Science cannot determine beforehand its methods any more than it can determine beforehand the nature of the object that it seeks to know. This is the very essence of science—that it does not set about its investigation with any preconceived ideas regarding either the object itself or the methods of investigation to be pursued. It leaves both for the object itself to unfold. The word scientific is, indeed, used in antithesis to that manner of investigation that assumes beforehand that it knows its object, and then sets about the investigation with methods conditioned by that supposed knowledge. This is the unscientific spirit, the method of preconceived opinion, of a priori research. It is the very essence of the scientific spirit, on the other hand, that it waits, watches, listens, keeps its eye on the fact it investigates, and lets that reveal its own nature, and along with this the methods by which it may be more deeply known. The methods by which it shall be known are only part of the process of its own revelation

of itself. The true scientist is afraid of nothing so much as that he shall carry to his work a biased mind. He fears nothing so much as that the impression he has of the object shall have been derived from some other source than the object itself, and hence that he shall unconsciously be blinded in his investigation. The true method of science insists, not that the mind shall work itself into the object, but that the object shall work itself into the mind. It is then the object that comes into the mind with its own environment, not the mind with its environment that enters the object. Let it not be supposed, however, that the mind can rid itself of its environment. That cannot be. And so there will be different conceptions of the object as there are different types of mind, with different sets of conceptions and different theories of the universe. A man cannot rid himself of that mental furnishing that forms his mental character. But what science does insist on is that each investigator pursue the scientific method, the method of true knowledge, and let the object work itself into his mind, and not the mind into the object. In this way the object will have the chance to create for itself in the mind of him who receives it its own environment. That which has been erroneous in his conception of it will give place to that which is true. Systems of thought that are inconsistent with it will be modified, or will give way to that system in which the object itself belongs. The object will not only give the true conception of itself, but also the true conception of that system in which it exists in relation. And this is only saying that facts condition knowledge and guide to truth,—that the mind can have no true knowledge except as it is guided and determined by facts. For the truth concerning a fact is simply the true relation between the fact and the mind. The mind has truth when between it and its object there exists a perfect correlation. In order that the knowledge be true knowledge, the thing as known to the mind must correspond to the thing as it is in itself. The mind in knowledge seeks to be at one with the facts of the universe; it seeks to be in harmony with the world about it.

If, then, we are to satisfy the demands of science in our study of this particular problem, and are to gain results which science

shall recognize as valid not only for the determination of the religious life but also for the induction of a true philosophy, we must, as we have found, see to it that the sphere of our investigation be that in which is found the essential nature of the object studied, and also that the methods of investigations be such as are themselves determined by this object. That is, we must let the object itself determine our knowledge of itself. Our knowledge must be our knowledge of the object.

It need not be emphasized that it is in the sphere of self-consciousness (using this term in its broadest signification), that we study the life of Christ in its essential nature, and thus satisfy the demands of science as to the first point. We need not dwell on the fact that it is in this sphere that this branch of knowledge connects itself with scientific research in all other branches, and that results found by science here will be regarded as ultimate by science in all branches. So far as concerns validity the results here will stand on the same footing as results found in the natural sciences, as botany, geology, astronomy. Neither religion nor philosophy can rest until in this sphere as in other spheres there be results that shall be stamped with the seal of the most exacting science ; until here, as in other spheres, there be such a consensus on the part of scientific investigators as shall be authoritative not only for the world at large, but also for those whose work it is to take the results authenticated by the different sciences, and from them find that harmonious system of universal truth to which all contribute. The geologist studies the structure of the rocks, the botanist the living organism of the plant, the zoölogist the conscious life of the animal. In humanity, for the first time, do we find the self-conscious life of the spirit. It is the self-conscious spiritual life that is the essence of humanity. If we study man, we must study him in the sphere of self-consciousness. All that we can know of man, in his essential nature as man, is to be found here. And if man have within him the witness to a higher life than that of man, it is here that we must search for this witness. It is here that we must find the fact of the witness and its nature, and it is the validity of the witness as found here that we must determine. If there

be in human life the manifestation of divine life, if there be in man the revelation of God, it is in this sphere that we are to seek it. It is in this sphere that all investigations from whatever point of view, from whatever opinion approached, must meet, and all investigations made here, whatever be the type of mind, or individual prepossessions of the investigators, must in some degree contribute to that consensus of opinion for which all who investigate with the truly scientific spirit, with the spirit of true knowledge, must work.

It may be well to point out that we must distinguish between the facts of the self-consciousness of Jesus as formally presented in conceptions, and between the facts as they themselves existed. That is, we must distinguish between the symbols that represent the facts, and the facts themselves. We are studying the life of Christ. We want to know what were the facts of that life. For the facts of the life we must go to the life itself, to find there the facts as they were given in self-consciousness. It is in self-consciousness that the life comes to a knowledge of itself, and reveals itself. What it is in itself, it is in self-consciousness. This is the very essence of the life. The life is conscious of itself. It is self-conscious life. The only possible knowledge which we can have of the life as it was, is that given in self-consciousness. The only possible interpretation of the life as it existed in itself, is that interpretation which is given in self-consciousness. Hence, if we would know the life, we must know the life's knowledge of itself. Only the life itself knew itself immediately; all other knowledge of the life by others, to be valid, must be based on this. Underneath the knowledge that others possessed of Jesus is the knowledge that Jesus possessed of himself. Hence, if we would know the life not only in the sphere in which it must be known if the demands of science are to be met, but also on the basis of that which science will acknowledge as the only immediate and authentic witness, we must know it in its own knowledge and witness of itself. The life itself in its own knowledge of itself, is its own witness of itself.

We must, then, know the facts of the consciousness of Jesus,

as these were witnessed to by himself. What were the facts? What was his own conception of himself, of his work, of his destiny? What was his conception of God, of man? We want to know not only these facts, as they may be formally stated, but the inner spirit of the life. We want to know the principle and ideals of Jesus as these existed in his own consciousness, his inner convictions and certainties, his feelings, his states of mind, his underlying states of consciousness,—that we may know what the life was in itself, not merely as it is represented in the clear outline of thought, but as it was in the source from which all this came,—the life of which deeds and words were the expression,—the source from which these flowed, as the stream from the fountain. We do not really know the life until we know it not on the surface merely, but in the depths of its self-consciousness. We must seek to know the heart of the life, and the soul of the life, if the claims made on science by both religion and philosophy are to be satisfied.

All this is implied in the knowledge of the life. All this we are to find if our search is to be successful. This is what science seeks. This will be our scientific knowledge. These will be the facts as we find them; the facts that the object itself presents to us.

In the actual problem before us we find two processes involved; the one having to do with the determination of the symbols, the other with their valuation; the one with the formal, the other with the actual content of the self-consciousness of Jesus. The one asks,—What were the conceptions of that consciousness? The other,—What is the true value of these conceptions? The former we may call the process of criticism; the latter, the process of cognition.

These processes do not represent two distinct stages in the problem. They refer rather to the process, than to the order, of thought. They are not consecutive. Each is involved in the other. The process of criticism may be said to be incidental in the process of cognition; the process of cognition essential in the process of criticism. Their true relation is perhaps best

expressed when we say that the process of criticism is that process by which the cognitive faculty determines what are and what are not the true symbols of the life. The value given to the symbols that are found in the process of criticism to be true expressions of the consciousness of Jesus, will necessarily be an element in determining what other symbols are likewise expressions of that consciousness. It is evident that the completion of the critical process is necessary to the completion of the cognitive process, but with the completion of the former process the latter process must continue in the deeper and deeper understanding of the symbols found. It is into the cognitive process that the subjective element, that is, the knowledge and experience of the investigator, his conception of God and of the world, enters so largely as the determinative factor. The true valuation is obtained when the symbols are given the same value that they themselves had in the consciousness of Jesus. The problem seeks as near an approximation to this value as is possible.

Since scientific investigators differ both as to the formal and as to the actual content of the self-consciousness of Jesus, the problem must be regarded as one still to be solved. What the problem seeks is the unity of the self-consciousness of Jesus so far as it is possible to know that unity from the sources before us.

If we hold the records to be authentic, we must first show that in the diversity of representation, there is an essential unity. It must then be shown that the unity of representation is the unity of life. That Jesus was in reality what he is represented as deeming himself to be. That his consciousness of himself as the Messiah was his consciousness of the actual relations in which he existed; and that his growth in that consciousness was the growth in the consciousness of those actual relations. In short, that his self-consciousness was a true self-knowledge; that he was not a dreamer, a mystic, but indeed the Christ.

If we do not hold the records to be authentic, then we must discover, through the process of criticism, such portions of them as shall give, in the totality of the conceptions they present, that unity to which the life of Jesus, as it actually existed, may be held to correspond.

It is well to emphasize the fact that the problem seeks the unity of the self-consciousness of Jesus. It seeks to know the consciousness as an organic whole the individual parts of which find their essential nature in their relation to all the others. The question, therefore, is fundamental,—What is it that makes the unity of the whole in the diversity of parts? What is the law, the ideal, of the life? What is that guiding, developing, all-pervasive principle, that makes the life an organic unity? This law, or ideal, itself, we must find as a fact of consciousness. What is, then, that central conception that embodies this ideal, and how must we relate all other conceptions to this conception if we are to know the life as it really was?

There is a final stage in the ultimate solution of the problem of the self-consciousness of Jesus. Given the unity of the facts, what is our interpretation of them in relation to all reality? This is the philosophical, or metaphysical, stage. How do we relate the truth that science finds here with the truth that science finds in other branches of knowledge? What is our philosophy of Christ in relation to our philosophy of God and to our philosophy of the world? What is that complete system in which our knowledge of the facts presented in the self-consciousness of Jesus shall have its legitimate place? When science has shown the fact, in so far as it can do so, in its own uniqueness and individuality, then metaphysics must come in to wed this fact to all reality. In general the difficulty is that the scientist is too apt to play the part of the metaphysician before it is time for the metaphysician to come in. This is as true in the science of biblical history as in other history; in the realm of spiritual, as in the realm of physical life. To some extent every scientist must be a metaphysician. The true scientist must have in him somewhat of the metaphysician, just as the true metaphysician must have in him somewhat of the true scientist. A scientific imagination,—what is it but that insight into the nature of things, their laws and relations, as itself is an aid to the discovery of facts. But the scientist, whatever his field, must beware lest his imagination play him false. So, when the fact to be investigated is in the realm of the religious life,

though sympathy with and insight into that life be essential to the production of results, here as in other realms of fact, yet here perhaps even more than in other realms does the student need to take care that his metaphysical or theological predispositions do not lead him astray in his purely historical and scientific investigations. The sympathetic insight is necessary, and the power to interpret, and these may suggest the path of scientific enquiry, but this done, the facts themselves should be studied in the light of their own environment that they may be determined as they really are.

We have thus far been considering the problem in its historical and scientific aspects. We have yet to consider the practical bearings of the problem.